

by Dr. J.C. Ryle

what is the value of your

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**"For what shall it profit a man,
if he shall gain the whole world,
and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36.**



THIS STATEMENT by our Lord Jesus Christ ought to ring in our ears like a trumpet blast. It concerns our highest and best interests. It concerns OUR SOULS. What a serious question these words of Scripture contain! What a mighty sum of profit and loss they present to us for calculation! Where is the accountant who could balance it up? Where is the clever mathematician who would not be baffled by that sum? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It is the first step toward Heaven to find out the true worth of our souls.

Nowadays the things of this world are seen as being all important, with little thought given to the things of eternity. The life that we now live in our bodies is not the only life. There is a life to come. We have souls. All is not over when we take our last breath, and the doctor's last visit has been paid – when the funeral preparations are made, and the coffin is screwed down – when "ashes to ashes and dust to dust" has been pronounced over the grave. The spirit of man still lives on. We all have within us an undying soul.

There shall be a time when the sun shall cease to shine, and the moon no more give its light, but the soul of the humblest labourer is made of far more enduring stuff. It shall survive the crash of a dying universe and live on for all eternity. We have got to realize the responsibility and seriousness of having a never-dying soul.

Read your Bible and get to know what it says. Seek the Lord in prayer and pour out your heart before Him. Go to a place of worship regularly, hear the Gospel preached, and give God His day. If any ask you the reason why: if husband or wife, or child, or friend say, "Why are you doing this?" – answer them boldly and say, "I do these things because I have a soul."

The next remark I have to make is this, **ANYONE MAY LOSE HIS OWN SOUL**. You cannot save that soul of yours, my friend: remember that! You cannot make your own peace with God. You cannot wipe away a single sin. You cannot blot out any one of the wrongs which stand in the book of God against you. You cannot change your own heart, but there is one thing you can do, you can lose your own soul.

Where does the soul go to when lost? There is only one solemn answer to that question. There is only one place to which it can go, and that is hell. There is no such thing as annihilation. The lost soul goes to that place where the fire is not quenched – where there is blackness and darkness, wretchedness and despair for ever. It goes to hell – the only place for which it is suitable – since it is not suitable for heaven. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." *Psalm 9:17*.

Don't tell me what a man thinks about his soul when he is in the fullness of health; tell me instead what he thinks when the world is sinking beneath him, and death, judgement, and eternity are looming. Does anyone wish to have a clearer idea

of his soul's value? Then go and measure it by the opinions of the dead. Read in the Bible in St. Luke chapter 16 about the world to come, which gives us a glimpse of what dead men think of the value of their soul.

The last remark I have to make is this. **ANY MAN'S SOUL MAY BE SAVED.** I could not bear the awful responsibility of telling men that everyone has a soul – that anyone may lose his soul – that the loss of the soul is a loss for which nothing can make up – if I could not also proclaim that any man's soul may be saved.

I proclaim with a confidence, that anyone's soul may be saved because Christ has once died. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has died upon the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." *1 Peter 3:18*. Christ has taken your sins in His own body on the cross and allowed the punishment we all deserve to fall on Him.

If you will ask Jesus Christ to forgive your sins, then you can know that your soul will be saved for all Eternity. Is your soul in danger of being lost?

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